

## **Subsidy Standards – Family Bedroom Allocation**

**A. HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER SIZE ISSUED**

HUD guidelines required the OCHA to establish subsidy standards that determine the number of bedrooms a family will be issued on their Housing Choice Voucher. The subsidy standards must provide for the smallest number of bedrooms needed to house a family without overcrowding or conflicting with the space requirements of HUD's Housing Quality Standards.

**Housing Choice Voucher Program:** The OCHA establishes the payment standard by bedroom size. A family may lease a larger size unit than their Housing Choice Voucher bedroom size. Housing Choice Voucher holders may not initially lease a unit whose contract rent would result in the tenant's portion exceeding 40% of the family's monthly adjusted income. However, after the initial lease period a Housing Choice Voucher holder may choose to pay up to 50% of their gross monthly income for their portion of rent (only in the case of a rent increase).

The unit size assigned to a participant in the Rental Assistance Program serves as the basis for determining maximum rent that can be paid to an owner for the unit selected by the family under the Fair Market Rents established by HUD.

The unit size on the Housing Choice Voucher remains the same as long as the family composition remains the same, regardless of the actual unit size rented.

The subsidy standards for Rental Assistance issuance are set to determine the Housing Choice Voucher size to be issued. The OCHA does not limit who shares a bedroom/sleeping room. Guidelines for maximum Rental Assistance issuance are:

Single persons will be issued a one bedroom Housing Choice Voucher.

The head (and spouse, if applicable) of household will be eligible for a separate bedroom.

All other family members will use the standard of two persons per sleeping area except when OCHA allows exceptions that are justified by the health or handicap of family members, and/or other individual circumstances necessary for reasonable accommodation.

Foster children will be included in determining unit size.

These general guidelines are used in determining Housing Choice Voucher bedroom classification.

<u>HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER SIZE</u>	<u>MINIMUM # PERSONS IN HOUSEHOLD</u>	<u>MAXIMUM # PERSONS IN HOUSEHOLD</u>
0 BR	1	1
1 BR	1	2
2 BR	2	4
3 BR	4	6
4 BR	6	8
5 BR	8	10
6 BR	10	12

The OCHA may grant exceptions from the standards if the OCHA determines the exceptions are justified by the health or handicap of family members, and/or other individual circumstances necessary for reasonable accommodation.

The family may request a larger bedroom size Housing Choice Voucher, when based on an increase in family size or other circumstances which occurred after their initial application. This is accomplished by

submitting to the OCHA in writing a request for a larger size Housing Choice Voucher accompanied with the justification for the request (e.g. birth of a new child, marriage, etc.).

The OCHA will consider the request according to the conditions outlined in this Plan and determine whether or not the request will be granted. The necessity for an exception to unit size standards must be verified and documented. The granting of the exception shall be at the discretion of the OCHA.

Special circumstances may dictate a larger size than the Subsidy Standards including:

An elderly, handicapped, or disabled person who requires a live-in attendant or who, for medical or other reasonable accommodation reasons, cannot share a bedroom, as verified in writing by a knowledgeable professional (e.g., doctor, psychologist, case worker, social worker, independent or supported living agency).

## **B. CHANGES IN THE HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER SIZE**

### **Housing Choice Voucher Issuance After Lease-up:**

When there is a change in family composition that would result in a decrease or increase in the bedroom size the family would be eligible for, the adjustment will be made at the time of reexamination or when the family moves.

The unit considerations in this section should be used as a guide to determine whether and when the bedroom size should be changed. If an unusual situation occurs, which is not currently covered in this policy, the case will be taken to the Supervisor who will review the situation, depending on the individual circumstances and the verification provided.

The Housing Choice Voucher size will only be changed at annual recertification or when the family requests that the OCHA reissue a Housing Choice Voucher to permit the family to move to a new unit. However, if the OCHA made a mistake in the bedroom size designation, the family will be issued a Housing Choice Voucher of the appropriate size in order not to penalize the family.

**Housing Choice Voucher Program:** The OCHA establishes the payment standard by bedroom size. A family may lease a larger size unit than their Housing Choice Voucher bedroom size. The payment standard to be used is based on the lower of the actual number of bedrooms in the unit or the Housing Choice Voucher size issued to the family. Housing Choice Voucher holders may not lease a unit whose contract rent would result in the tenant's portion exceeding 40% of the family's monthly adjusted income. This applies when the gross rent of the unit exceeds the applicable payment standard for the family.

**Housing Quality Standards:** HQS Standards allow two persons per living/sleeping room and would permit the following maximum occupancy, assuming a living room is used as a living/sleeping area:

0-BR	1
1-BR	4
2-BR	6
3-BR	8
4-BR	10
5-BR	12
6-BR	14

These standards may be exceeded if a sleeping room other than a bedroom or living room is available and selected.

For the Housing Choice Voucher Program, families are not restricted by the bedroom size of the unit they select for housing other than the minimum Housing Quality Standards, maximum occupancy and maximum tenant contributions of initial lease.



